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Intelligence Memorandum

Lebanon: Prospects for Reconstruction

Secret

PS 77-10001
March 1977

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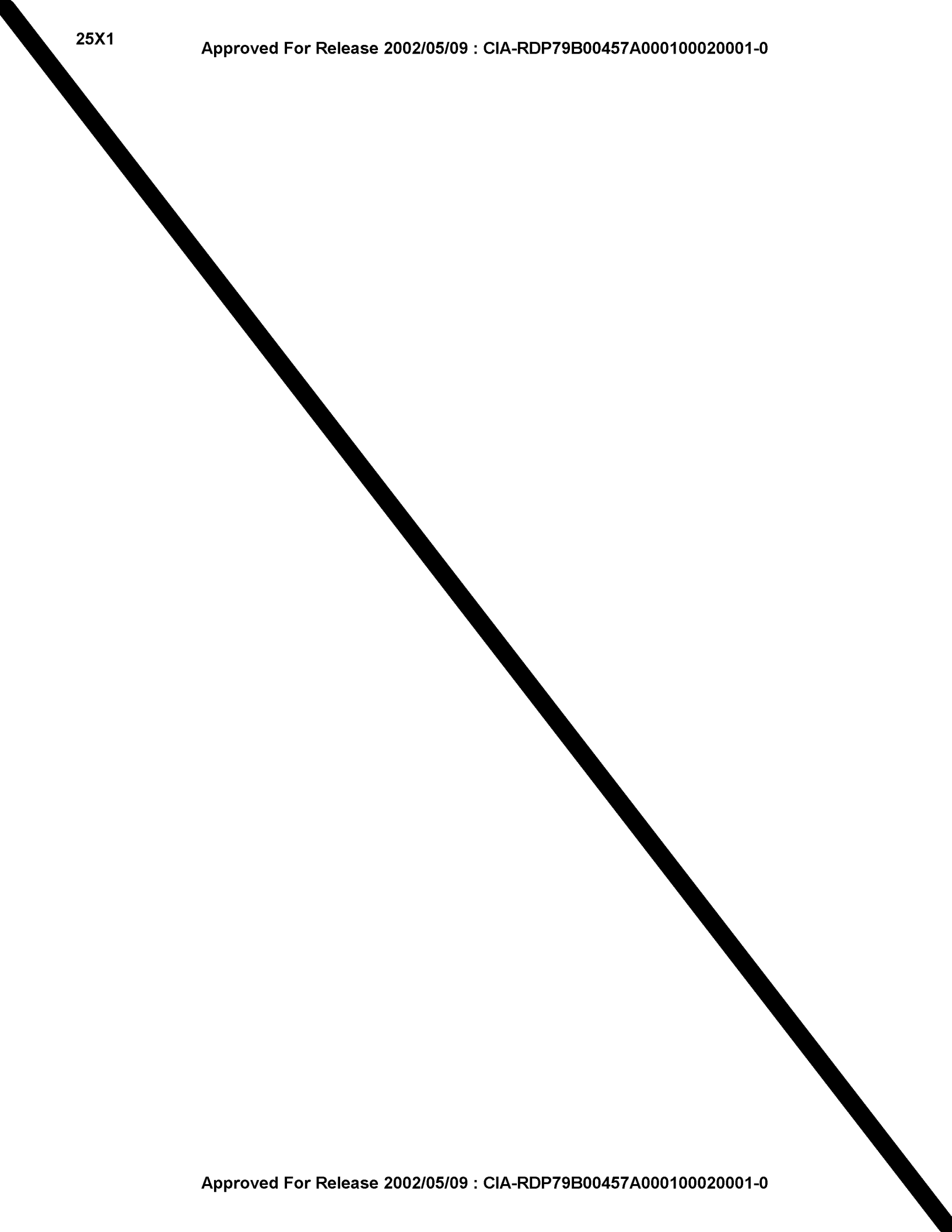

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LEBANON: PROSPECTS FOR RECONSTRUCTION

Conclusions

1. The cease-fire in Lebanon now appears likely to hold long enough for President Sarkis to launch a serious reconstruction program. Sarkis is delaying negotiations on political reform until reconstruction is under way.

2. Human casualties, population displacement, and material losses during the 20 months of civil war were severe, and have created serious obstacles to economic reconstruction and political reconciliation. Lebanon suffered at least 40,000 killed, $3 billion in physical damage, and $4-5 billion in lost income.

3. No early progress toward political reconciliation is likely. Lebanon has experienced de facto partition, and none of the principal parties to the civil war shows any sign of willingness to make significant concessions.

4. The basic requisites for rapid economic recovery are present: the economic infrastructure is essentially intact, sufficient trained manpower and external

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This memorandum was prepared in CIA's Directorate of Intelligence with contributions from the Center for Policy Support and the Offices of Economic Research, Geographic and Cartographic Intelligence, Regional and Political Analysis, and Strategic Research. Comments should be directed to [redacted]

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financing are available, and the Lebanese government is financially strong.

5. High priority reconstruction goals--the distribution of emergency relief and the restoration of essential public services--appear realistic and attainable in a short time. Plans for more ambitious reconstruction programs are under way, but will take years to implement.

6. US aid commitments beyond emergency relief supplies might concentrate on providing equipment and materials that can be quickly assimilated into the economy. These would include construction, transportation, and specifically roadbuilding equipment.

7. Beirut is likely again to become a major business and financial center of the Middle East but will face permanent and significant competition from the alternative centers that have been strengthened over the past year.

8. An effective Lebanese internal security force probably can be reconstructed within several months. Establishment of a new Lebanese army would be much more difficult and politically risky; it would also take at least several years.

9. The security force Lebanon needs at this time would be largely infantry and highly mobile. It would need moderate firepower and reliable communications, but no advanced weapons. To create such a force, the Lebanese will need primarily communications equipment, light infantry weapons, and a variety of vehicles.

10. No Lebanese security force likely to be created in the next few years will be able to deal effectively with renewed civil war or a significant external threat. Syrian troops will be needed in Lebanon for at least several months; cooperation with Syria will be essential for years.

11. The greatest immediate threat to Lebanon's security--and therefore its reconstruction program--is

the instability in southern Lebanon. If Israel does not permit significant numbers of Arab security forces to enter the area, this problem will persist at least for the many months it will take to establish an effective Lebanese security force.

The cease-fire agreement arranged by the principal Arab states last October and enforced by some 30,000 Syrian peacekeeping troops has halted the worst phase of the Lebanese civil war. None of the combatants is in a position to resume major hostilities, and most have grudgingly accepted the mandate Syria received from the Arab League to impose a truce.

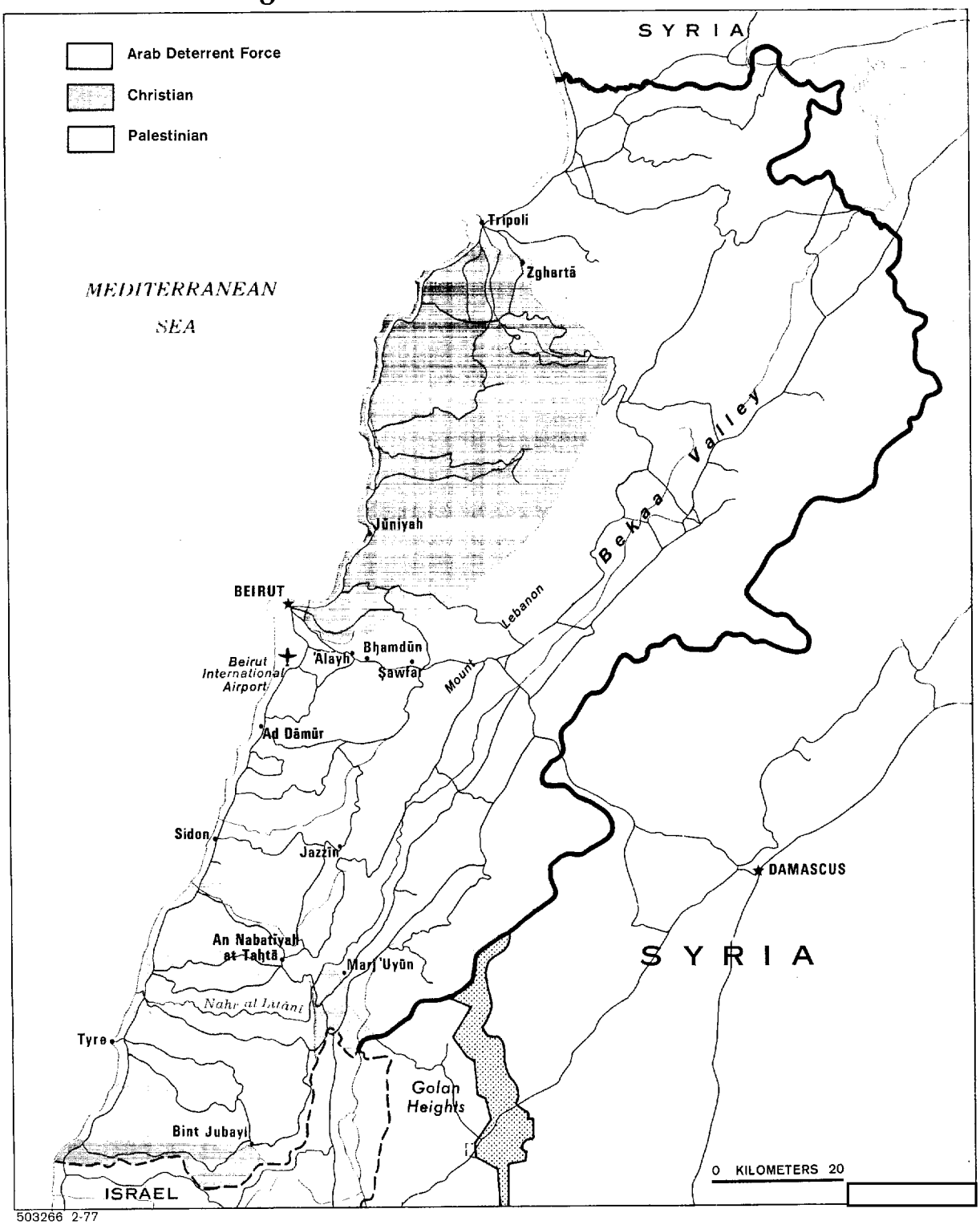
The pax Syriana should provide sufficient security for President Sarkis and the new Lebanese government to begin their reconstruction program. Although sporadic violence will slow the pace of reconstruction, especially in Beirut and other coastal cities, the current strength and disposition of the Syrian forces could prevent major disruptions in all but the southern portion of the country. Tensions continue to be high between Israeli-backed Christian troops and Palestinian forces in the south.

The broad emergency powers granted the government by the Lebanese parliament, coupled with Syrian military backing, have given Sarkis temporary authority to set priorities and policies without being thwarted by sectarian quarreling. Sarkis recognizes that the search for a durable political settlement will be long and arduous, and he has emphasized that he will pursue security and reconstruction before launching peace talks.

Sarkis' strategy is to protect the substance and progress of his reconstruction program from political bargaining by delaying efforts at formal reconciliation. In the meantime, he intends to create the "facts" of reunification by rebuilding the country. Sarkis hopes in this way to resolve some of the lesser issues that divide Christians and Muslims, allow the bitterness of war to subside, strengthen moderate voices in both camps, and thus improve the chances for successful peace negotiations.

If he is to have any chance of carrying out his plan, Sarkis will need continuing cooperation from the Syrians, timely financial and technical assistance from other Arabs and the West, and continued support from key Arab states and the US. Even with this help, however, the magnitude and complexity of the task he faces ensure that reconstruction will take several years.

Lebanon: Controlling Factions



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War Damage: Human Losses

Lebanon suffered staggering human losses during the 20 months of civil war. Casualties reached at least 40,000 killed and 200,000 wounded. If these figures were transposed to a population the size of the US, the result would be 3 million dead and 15 million wounded.

The prolonged civil strife led to the departure from Lebanon of a large proportion of the population, primarily foreign workers and Lebanese Christian professionals. These persons are gradually returning, but their loss--temporary or permanent--has created a serious impediment to early reconstruction.

As many as 1.5 million persons, half the country's population, may have been displaced. Most European and American nationals returned home, and an estimated 400,000 Syrians and 150,000 Palestinians fled to Syria. Many middle-class Palestinians then emigrated to Europe and the United States. As many as 500,000 Lebanese may have left the country. Most of these moved initially to Syria; later several thousand continued on to Jordan, the Persian Gulf states, Egypt, Europe, or the US.

Somewhat fewer persons moved from one area of Lebanon to another. In the early months of the fighting, large numbers of Shia Muslims and Palestinians fled Beirut and the other port cities for south Lebanon, which most had left in earlier years to search for employment in the urban areas. Most of these persons are believed to have returned to the cities since the fighting ended and southern Lebanon became the most insecure part of the country.

The most permanent population changes have probably occurred in the Beirut area. The formerly Muslim Qarantina district and the Palestinian refugee camps of Tall Zaatar and Jisr el-Bacha are now under Christian control. These areas were razed immediately after Christian occupation, and are not likely to be repopulated by Lebanese Muslims or Palestinians. Similarly, Christians fled the town of Ad Damur, just south of Beirut, when it was captured by Palestinian and Lebanese Muslim forces, and it is doubtful that it will be returned to Christian control.

In the rural areas, relatively small numbers of persons fled from one location to another to avoid the fighting. In the Al Biqa Valley, for example, Christians left their villages and sought sanctuary in the provincial capital of Zahlah. Most such refugees in the north and east probably have returned to their villages by now. There was relatively little population displacement in the heavily Christian areas of central Lebanon.

After the civil strife, the population distribution of Lebanon--with the exception of parts of Beirut and the confessionally mixed area just south of the Beirut-Damascus highway--remains about as it was before the war.* Whether the emigration of people has significantly changed the balance between the Christian and Muslim populations is not known, and probably will not be known. Reliable demographic data for planning reconstruction will not be available.

War Damage: Material Losses

Material destruction during the civil war was severe. In Beirut, the commercial center and some residential areas were virtually leveled; in Tripoli--the second largest city--destruction apparently was worse. Some secondary towns--notably Ad Damur--were devastated. The infrastructure that serves the major coastal areas apparently was not irreparably damaged, but the cost of restoring it will be high.

Although accurate breakdowns on the losses incurred by the various combatants are not available, it would appear that the Christians suffered less in terms of material damage than their Muslim adversaries, and that their economic advantage over the Muslim majority is now even more pronounced.

Estimating this damage in useful economic terms is very difficult, but it appears that Lebanon suffered at

See Appendix for detailed demographic information on Lebanon.

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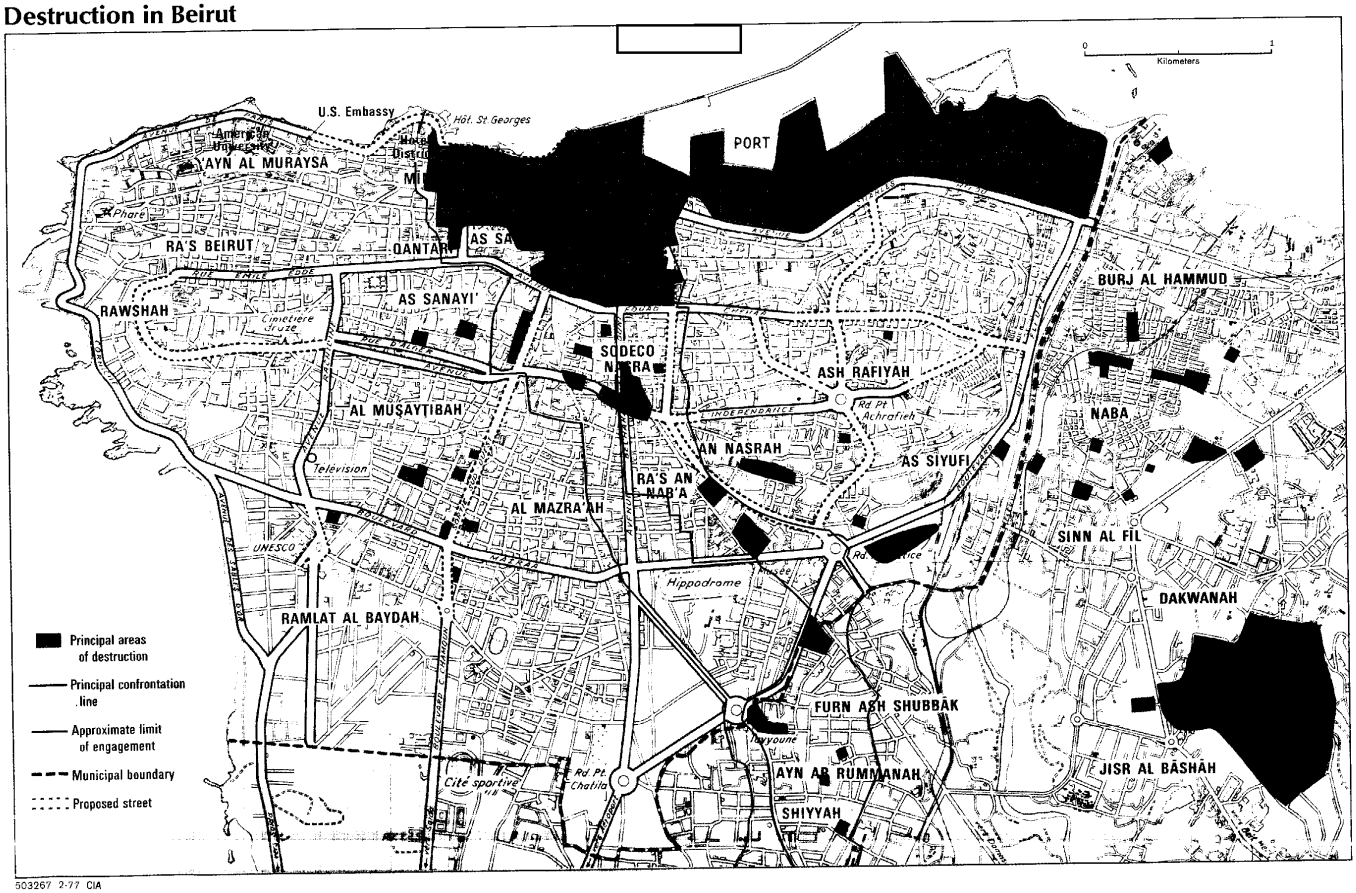
Destruction in Beirut



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least $3 billion in physical damage and an additional $4-$5 billion in lost income. Beirut's commercial center has been almost totally destroyed and only an estimated 10 percent of Lebanon's industrial facilities are still in operating order.

Although no shortage of housing now exists, substantial numbers of displaced persons are living in homes and apartments abandoned by others. This situation has already caused a political problem for the government, and a serious housing shortage will develop if a sizable proportion of the estimated one million refugees who fled Lebanon return to the country.

Balancing these grim statistics are several positive notes. Despite heavy fighting in the area and the almost complete destruction of storage facilities and equipment, the port of Beirut should be able to begin operations soon. The harbor sustained only minimal damage. Beirut International Airport also suffered only moderate damage and will be able to accommodate pre-war levels of activity as soon as new navigational equipment is installed. Basic utilities such as the telephone and electricity have survived the fighting with very little serious damage, and need only minor repair of grid work to restore service to most essential areas.

The central government has emerged from the conflict in sound financial shape. Eighty percent of Lebanese currency remains backed by gold, and foreign exchange reserves total about $1.6 billion. The government itself spent next to nothing on the war, which was financed externally and through private fund raising. As a result, the Sarkis government should be able to borrow enough in international money markets to help finance reconstruction.

War Damage: The Political System

Lebanon has experienced a de facto partition: the Christians now control a state within a state. By the time the cease-fire was imposed, they had regained most of their traditional core area in the Mount Lebanon area and had evicted almost all Palestinians and Muslims from east Beirut. Although the truce calls for the withdrawal of all combatants from their forward positions, the Christians have turned battle lines into borders, established their own public administration and services, and

generally begun preparing for permanent partition. The Christians' heavy war losses have heightened their sense of being a beleaguered minority that cannot afford any diminution of its political power.

There is virtually no meaningful economic or social interchange between the Christian sector and other parts of the country, and a new wave of terrorism could heighten the conviction among many Christians that full reunification is impossible. The Christians--more than any other segment of the population--feel that Lebanon has been victimized by broader Middle East tensions and that stability cannot be re-established until the Palestinians are able to leave Lebanon. The attitude that Lebanon no longer controls its fate--perhaps more than the losses suffered in the war--has reinforced Christian separatism.

The civil war undermined the confidence of all Lebanese. The collapse of central authority, no matter how inevitable it might seem in retrospect, was a sobering shock to the many Christians and Muslims who believed that their tradition of consensus-building and compromise would stave off full-scale war. The numerous shattered cease-fire agreements attest to both the erosion of the traditional political process and the persistence of those who wanted to believe in it.

The war has badly damaged the Lebanese perception of themselves as highly refined people who could stand aloof from intra-Arab disputes and serve as a model of democracy for their neighbors and a bridge to the West. Although these images might have been illusory, they helped the Lebanese maintain their neutrality in the region, sustain a delicate confessional balance at home, and preserve the principles of restraint and compromise that were the cornerstones of the political process in better times. Many are now left with a sense of lost direction and with a new cynicism that includes a resigned acceptance of violence.

Plans for Reconstruction

Sarkis is banking heavily on the rapid reconstruction of Lebanon as the best hope for restoring stability and reuniting the country. Over the past several months

he has been collaborating with a small group of advisers on a detailed reconstruction plan designed to rectify social and economic dislocations caused by the war and eliminate many of the problems that triggered it. It is a blueprint for rebuilding the country in a way that encourages reunification.

The most immediate priority in the reconstruction effort is the restoration of essential public services, including electricity, telephone, telex, air and port facilities. Plans for more ambitious reconstruction projects, including the redevelopment of Beirut and various nationwide construction programs, are also being prepared.

The rebuilding and expansion of Beirut is the centerpiece of Sarkis' plan. Lebanon's planners are anxious to alter the existing situation in which the capital is divided into a well-off inner core and a slum-infested outer ring. Efforts will focus on integrating the two parts by improving housing and amenities in the suburbs and establishing a better transit system for the entire Beirut region. Some public housing projects may be started, and Muslim slum areas most affected by the fighting may be razed. Some industrial facilities may be moved away from Beirut altogether in an effort to establish employment opportunities in Lebanon's poorer rural areas. Long-term plans for the city center include the creation of a new area for commercial development, and construction of a new presidential palace, parliament building, and cultural center.

The government has emphasized its intention to restore the country's education system in a way that transcends religious and community ties and inculcates a sense of nationalism. A national superhighway system has also been proposed. It would link the various sections of Lebanon much more closely and provide additional jobs in the rural areas.

Expenditures to cover these ambitious programs are presently slated at $800 million annually over the next 15 years. The government plans to contribute from its own resources about $100 million per year. The balance is to be raised abroad, principally in the form of long-term, low-interest loans from both bilateral and multilateral sources. Several Arab and Western governments

have expressed willingness to aid the Lebanese government with sizable loans and grants. Arab development funds supported by the Persian Gulf states have already pledged $342 million. Procuring additional commercial financing should pose no problem, given the basically sound financial shape of the central government.

US aid commitments beyond purely emergency relief supplies might be concentrated on providing equipment and materials that can be quickly assimilated into the reconstruction process. Construction, transportation, and, specifically, roadbuilding equipment probably would be the most useful items.

Virtually all aid transfers--especially financing for housing repair or construction--will be absorbed by the Central Bank or Development Bank and then funneled through the private banking sector to qualified loan applicants at nominal rates of interest. By reserving a key role for the private banking sector in the reconstruction program, the government has gained the support of the normally conservative and powerful entrepreneurial class. This close working relationship may come under strain later as reconstruction progresses and economic imperatives become less clearly defined, but at least initially the government can depend on the almost total cooperation of the resourceful and skilled business community in implementing its economic policies.

Beirut is working to regain its dominant role as the Middle East's financial and business entrepot. This will be difficult, because Bahrain, Dubai, and Amman, among others, have begun to establish themselves as major banking and commercial centers, and will continue to vie with the Lebanese in attracting Western finance and business. Beirut's amenities and facilities were far superior in the past, however, and when rebuilt should again draw considerable numbers of financial institutions and other businesses back to Lebanon. Several major banks have already resumed operations in Beirut.

The unanimous parliamentary endorsement and sweeping legislative powers the new government has received will give Sarkis a relatively free hand to implement these reconstruction plans. The ultimate success of the

program will depend upon its ability to produce sustained growth before the Syrian security umbrella is lifted. If the security situation can be maintained at a tolerable level of minor and sporadic violence for the next several months, Lebanon's prospects for economic recovery appear good.

The Security Dilemma

Sarkis' government has formally committed itself to rebuilding the Lebanese military as quickly as possible, but it has done so only in the context of providing the public with assurances of protection against Israeli incursions in the south. Other indications suggest that Sarkis will concentrate on the more practical and promising strategy of creating an internal security and police force loyal to him, and proceed more slowly in rebuilding the regular armed forces.

Sarkis has little reason to believe that a new Lebanese army could be insulated from sectarian antagonism--no matter how careful a balance is struck between Muslims and Christians. The military proved far more vulnerable to the political forces that pushed the country into civil war than either the internal security forces or police. By most accounts, only a minority of the armed forces refused to take sides during the fighting. In addition, Sarkis probably is concerned that he would not be able to fend off attempts by both the Syrians and traditional Christian leaders to manipulate the loyalty of a new defense establishment. If he is to have any chance of establishing himself as an independent and pre-eminent authority, Sarkis cannot afford to allow the emergence of a military that could undermine him.

Sarkis probably realizes that he has a far better chance over the near term of controlling an internal security force, which would be better able to combat the immediate problem of urban violence and terrorism than the conventionally organized Syrian forces. Equally important, such a Lebanese force would provide a buffer between Syrian peacekeeping forces and an increasingly resentful Lebanese public. Having established a security force, he could then coordinate the restoration of the regular armed forces with the disarmament of private militias. This would give him time to solicit assistance

from other countries--especially from the US--that could provide a counterweight to Damascus.

Requirements of a New Security Force

A Lebanese security force designed expressly to deal with insurgency, terrorism, and subversion--areas that fall between routine police functions and defense of the country against an external threat--will need to be equipped differently from a conventional army. To be effective, such a security force would have to be largely infantry and highly mobile, capable of moving from one part of the country to another very quickly. The force would need moderate firepower and reliable communications. It probably should total between 20,000 and 25,000 men--that is, larger than the standing Lebanese army that numbered 17,000 prior to its disintegration last year, but smaller than the 30,000 Syrian troops now in Lebanon. Because of its mission and the need to minimize problems in training sufficient manpower to operate and maintain any equipment provided, a new force would not need advanced weapon systems.

To allow sufficient mobility, a new force probably would need an armored personnel carrier for each infantry squad, as well as jeeps and trucks. Troop-carrying helicopters would need to be available so that a battalion or two of infantry could be moved rapidly throughout the country. About 20 to 30 helicopters would be needed to transport a lightly armed battalion. Additional helicopters and light aircraft would be needed for scouting and forward observation. Perhaps a dozen or so small coastal patrol boats and several landing craft for troops also would be necessary to enable the Lebanese to secure their coastline against arms smugglers.

Such a force could be equipped mainly with light infantry weapons--pistols, machine guns, automatic weapons, grenades, and mortars. Some recoilless rifles and light antitank weapons would be needed for use against hardened positions and vehicles. To support the infantry, several hundred armored cars would be needed, in addition to medium and short-range field artillery and light tanks.

We believe that more sophisticated weapons such as fighter aircraft, medium tanks, antiaircraft systems, and antitank systems like the US-made TOW probably would not be warranted by the type of opposition that the Lebanese force would be likely to encounter. If wider hostilities were to resume, no Lebanese force likely to be created in the next two years would be of much use.

Lebanon's success in maintaining internal order will depend greatly upon the quality of its intelligence and the ability of its security force to communicate rapidly and effectively. The Lebanese must not only be able to detect trouble as soon as it occurs--a function of good intelligence--but must be able to report it expeditiously so that decisive coordinated action can be taken quickly. The Lebanese, therefore, will have to establish a reliable intelligence network, and will need a centralized, high-speed, possibly computerized communications system, with appropriate mobile equipment for units in the field, and with adequate communications encipherment capabilities.

The Syrian Guardianship

Sarkis appreciates fully that his near-term prospects for maintaining security depend heavily on continuing close cooperation with the Syrians. Although the Syrian guardianship over Lebanon is likely to produce increasing differences between Sarkis and Damascus, they now seem to agree on the need to balance the strengths of Muslims and Christians and use Syrian troops to restore order. The Syrians have on several occasions moved against radical Palestinians, Muslim leftists, and other critics of Syria's presence in Lebanon without consulting Sarkis, but they have generally coordinated with him and allowed him to take the lead in truce negotiations.

If Sarkis harbors suspicions about Damascus' long-term intentions in Lebanon, he has not let them interfere with his cooperation with the Syrians. Sarkis can develop no credible alternative to Syrian support for the foreseeable future, and there almost certainly will be occasions when he will need to use Syria's military backing more forcefully. Nevertheless, if he is to maintain the confidence of the Lebanese factions and the Palestinians in future peace talks, he must avoid becoming or even giving the appearance of being a tool of Damascus.

In order to allay the fears of his Muslim and Palestinian constituencies, Sarkis has relied on the cooperation of the Egyptians, Saudis, and Kuwaitis, who with the Syrians are sponsoring truce negotiations. Paradoxically, Sarkis is having far greater difficulty with his fellow Christians, who are becoming increasingly suspicious of his ties with the Syrians.

Although the strong US endorsement of Sarkis' presidency helped initially to balance Christian distrust, Sarkis will need more tangible evidence that the US and other friends of the Christian community support his policies and are prepared to serve as counterweights to Syrian and other growing Muslim influences over Lebanon.

The Syrians' desire to move quickly and forcefully to tighten security may also pose problems for Sarkis, who prefers to move slowly, negotiate rather than use force, and avoid provoking intransigence from any quarter. The Syrians are displeased that Sarkis has not been more forceful in negotiations on disarmament and in finding an acceptable formula for deploying peacekeeping troops to southern Lebanon.

The Palestinian Problem

The most intractable problem for Sarkis and the Syrians, and the one that will require their closest cooperation, is finding a formula for the continued presence of the Palestinians in Lebanon. Until they have developed at least a temporary accommodation on this issue, prospects for a durable peace are bleak, and the two outstanding threats to security--continuing tensions in the south and the stockpiling of weapons by all the combatants--will remain.

The quadripartite committee of Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait that was established to oversee the truce has apparently made some progress in gaining agreement from the combatants on disarmament. The committee has not, however, settled the more fundamental question of how much freedom and military strength the Palestinians will be allowed to retain in southern Lebanon.

The Christians, for their part, see the two issues as inextricably entwined. They will not surrender their

weapons until they are assured that the Palestinians in all areas of the country are confined to refugee camps or other bases and their heavy weapons confiscated. Even this arrangement would not satisfy militant Christians, who are demanding a substantial exodus of fedayeen from Lebanon.

The Palestinians argue that the Lebanese in the 1969 Cairo accords have already granted the fedayeen the right to arm and defend themselves in southern Lebanon. Despite their current military and political disadvantages, Palestinian leaders show no signs of compromise on this issue and seem to have at least tacit sympathy for their position from the other Arabs.

Ironically, the Israelis' continued refusal to allow significant numbers of "non-Lebanese" peacekeeping forces to advance into southernmost Lebanon has permitted the Palestinians to continue receiving arms through Tyre and to move both men and weapons from the north to redoubts in the south. The Israeli position--although in part due to genuine concern over the prospect of Syrian troops moving closer to their borders--is also intended to reserve for Israel the job of controlling southern Lebanon.

For some time the Israelis have been providing advisers, weapons, and artillery support to a force of about 1,000 Christians who have established buffer zones along the border. Although the Israelis seem content for the present to confine themselves to a monitoring and support role, they could with Christian compliance use their position to create serious tensions in the area, possibly to disrupt the Arabs' current peace offensive.

Sarkis must find a way to extend his authority over the south, not only to establish his position as president of all Lebanon but also to ensure that tensions in the south do not undermine the truce elsewhere. The large numbers of fedayeen and the many heavy weapons that have been moved to southern Lebanon could easily be moved back north. As long as the Israelis and Christians do not intentionally escalate the fighting, Sarkis can probably afford over the near term to allow tension to simmer and still proceed with reconstruction. He seems

to prefer this course to risking trouble from the Israelis and their Christian allies.

Sarkis will look to the US for help in cautioning Tel Aviv against upsetting the truce and in moderating the Christians. Of even greater importance to Sarkis is the help he is hoping the US will extend in taking new Middle East peace initiatives leading to a permanent resolution of the Palestinian question.

Like many other Lebanese, Sarkis has come to see a direct link between resolution of Lebanon's strife and an accommodation of Palestinian national aspirations. Although he is less adamant than many of his co-religionists, Sarkis probably shares their belief that Lebanon cannot restore its confessional balance and its democratic institutions and at the same time cope with a large, well-armed community of foreigners, revolutionary in their outlook, leftist in their political leanings, and implacably hostile to one of Lebanon's neighbors.

Appendix

Lebanon: Population

Lebanon's complex demographic makeup is reflected in the 1943 National Covenant, which gives each of the country's 14 major religious communities a theoretically equitable representation in the Chamber of Deputies according to its proportion of the total population. According to the 1932 census, the Christian community, which is predominantly Maronite, holds a majority--6 to 5 ratio--over the Muslims. This fictional balance has been maintained by avoiding a new census that would reveal a change in favor of the Muslims. Some demographers believe that Muslims may now outnumber the Christians by as much as 2 to 1.

In 1968, US demographers estimated Lebanon's population at 2.6 million. A more detailed breakdown, by religion, is given below. It is the Lebanese government's 1965 population estimate based on the 1932 census with birth registrations added and death registrations deleted.

Beirut is more than 6.5 times larger than Tripoli, the next largest city, and contains more than 70 percent of Lebanon's foreign population. Before the civil war, the Beirut area contained 5 of the 15 Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

The distribution of Lebanon's population is primarily a function of religion: different religious communities form majorities in different sections of the country. The three districts of Beirut Province reflect the city's division into Christian and Muslim sectors. The urban Christian population is composed of the smaller sects; the urban Muslim population is primarily Sunni.

In the Province of Ash Shamal, the northern districts are predominantly Sunni Muslim while the southern districts are Christian (Greek Orthodox and Maronite). In the Province of Jabal Lubnan, the districts north of Beirut have Maronite majorities while those to the south

have numbers of Druze, Sunni, and Greek Orthodox, though they also have a considerable Maronite population. The Province of Al Janub is Shia dominated. All the districts, except Jazzin, are 30 to over 80 percent Shia--Jazzin is 50 to 80 percent Maronite. The city of Sidon is Sunni, and there are minorities of Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox throughout the province. Al Biqa Province has the most uniform mix of religious groups. The Shia dominate in Ba'labakk-Hirmil District, but no sect holds a large majority in the other two districts.

Officially Declared Lebanese Population in 1965*
(figures rounded to nearest thousand)

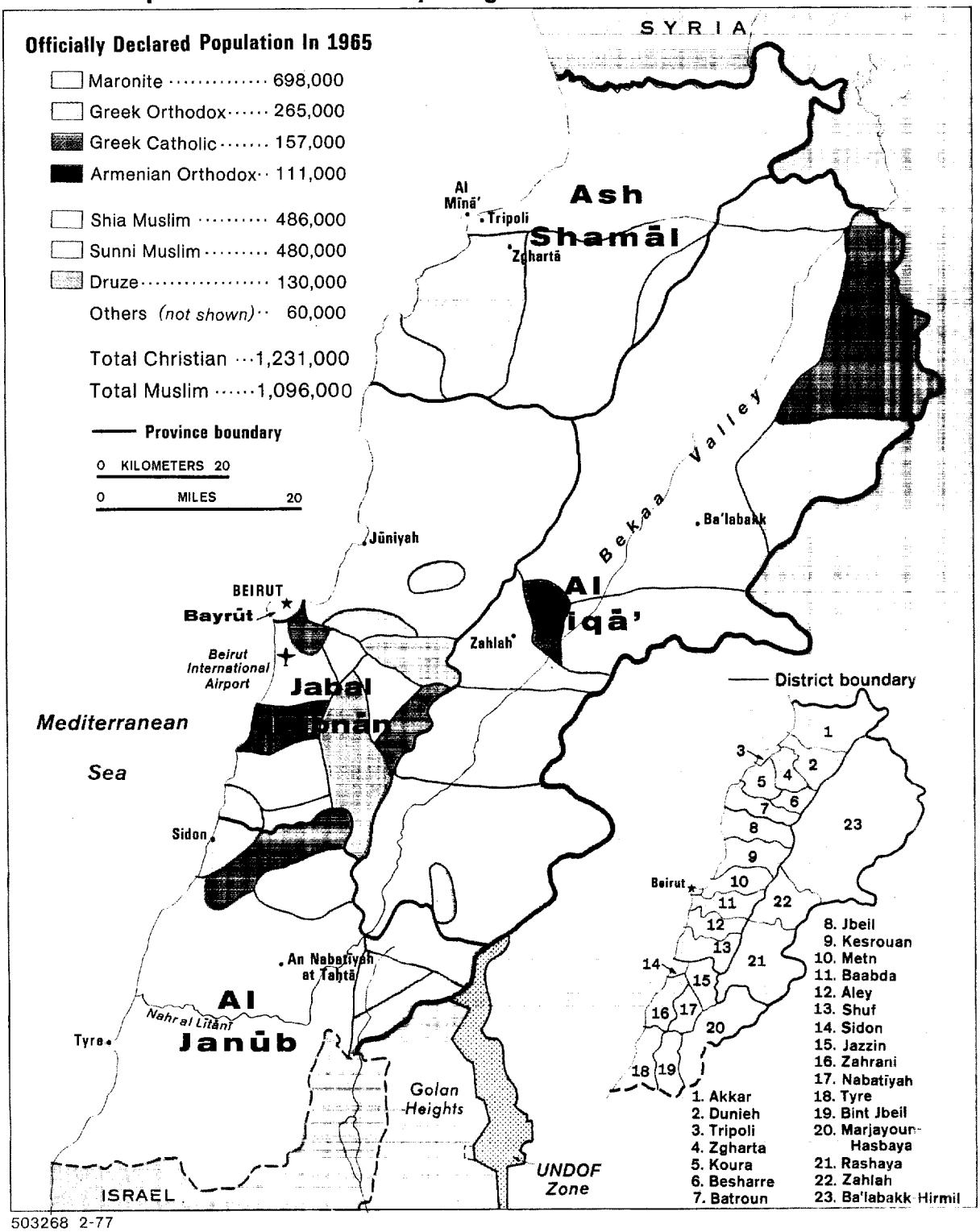
Confession	Population	
Maronite	698,000	
Greek Orthodox	265,000	1,231,000 Christians
Greek Catholic	157,000	
Armenian	111,000	
Shia	486,000	
Sunni	480,000	1,096,000 Muslims
Druze	130,000	
Others	60,000	
Total Population	2,387,000*	

Lebanon's cities in normal times contain over 45 percent of the country's population. Listed below are the 10 largest urban centers and their estimated 1970 populations.

Beirut	1,200,000
Tripoli	175,000
Sidon	50,000
Zahlah	40,000
Juniyah	22,000
Ba'labakk	20,000
Tyre	14,000
An Nabatiyah at Tahta	11,000
Al Mina	11,000
Zgharta	10,000

**These figures include nearly 1 million people of Lebanese origin (mainly Christians) who live overseas but are counted to maintain the traditional ratio between Christians and Muslims. The figures do not include the foreign population of about 500,000. The number of actual inhabitants in 1965 is estimated to have been approximately 1,900,000.*

Lebanon: Population Distribution By Religion



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